PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

BALANCED ASSESSMENT

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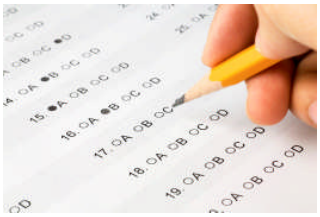

Virginia Commonwealth University

The Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Richmond, Virginia

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR
NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

A project administered by

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Professional Development Toolkit for New and Beginning Teachers

The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS is a research-based video streamed program with accompanying resource documents. The program is an outgrowth of a previous Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) online mentoring study at Virginia Commonwealth University. The findings of the online mentoring study revealed twelve topics new and beginning teachers felt additional university training would have led them to more effective use of best practices in the classroom. In this program, each of the twelve topics is presented in two to six stand alone video segments. The total number of segments is forty five. Suggested uses, in addition to personal viewing by K-12 teachers for self improvement, include professional development, mentor and mentee, university prospective teacher, and small or large group training.

The facilitators are university faculty and practitioners with field experience. Each is currently involved in teacher training or serves as a staff development administrator. All are currently engaged in educational research, teaching and/or educational policy development.

The teachers in the video programs are classroom teachers. Some of them were participants in the 2006 Online Mentoring Study in which the topics for this project were identified. They represent all disciplines in K-12 grades.

Resource documents for the programs are provided as PDF files to facilitate the use of the 45 video segments. The first set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) an introduction to program facilitators, including a definition of each topic, and a list of the video segments, and (3) a research formative study summary that helped to guide the project's development. The second set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) a full text transcript for each video segment, (3) a set of problems and solutions related to each video segment in the form of a work-study guide, and (4) an annotated bibliographic summary of references and Internet links for each transcript. Many of the organizations and agencies referenced in the transcripts are actively involved in the development of video and professional development presentations that support policy and advocacy.

Every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information. Internet content, however, does appear, disappear and change over time. CEPI, as a university-based educational policy research institute endorses no specific position of any listed group.

BALANCED ASSESSMENT

SEGMENT #3: STUDENT GENERATED ASSESSMENTS

🗁 VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT

Balanced Assessment: Recognition of teacher-made assessment, student produced products, and standardized assessment as balanced assessment.

Facilitator: Dr. Christopher Corallo, Director of Staff Development
Henrico County Public Schools

AUDIO	VIDEO
Shavelson, a science assessment researcher states that student products and performance tasks are an effective way to bring assessment into alignment with instructional goals. Projects and performance tasks can be thought of as a form of "embedded assessment"- assessment tasks that are a part of instruction. I am Christopher Corallo with the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University. Student generated products are not often viewed as part of an assessment program, but as an extra or added fun activity. When in reality they can be a great way to get students to begin to take responsibility for their learning. By applying learning to develop a product, students can figure out what they need to learn better to complete the task and they often take responsibility for getting the new learning. Student products and projects are also a great way for a teacher to assess more deeply how well a student is internalizing the learning and can apply it to a task or project. In order for student projects to truly be good assessment and not just something fun to do, teachers must carefully design the assignment. When doing so, Rick Stiggins (2001) suggests that teachers ask themselves the following questions about the project or assignment. ▪ Will this activity require my students to create, perform, or produce something? ▪ Will this activity encourage student self-reflection? ▪ Will this activity allow me to measure outcomes of significance? ▪ Will this activity tap higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills? ▪ Do I provide for real world applications of what is learned? ▪ Do I encourage students to learn beyond the scope of an assignment? Other questions Rick Stiggins suggests that teachers ask themselves have a personal application to assessment and reflection on learning. Here are a few:	DR. CORALLO

▪ As the teacher, am I using human judgment for scoring or am I relying solely on machine scoring? ▪ Do I provide sufficient opportunities for teacher self assessment? ▪ Have I developed explicit performance criteria for students to measure their progress against? ▪ Do I provide time for teacher self reflection? When teachers and students are collaborators in assessment they develop the habit of self-reflection. Reif (1990) and Wolf (1989) say qualities of good work are learned by this collaboration between the teacher and the student. In a collaborative environment students learn how to judge their work against qualities of good work, and how to step back from their work to assess efforts and feelings of accomplishment. I asked one of our teachers to briefly describe how she used student generated products for assessment.	
I am Gaynell Lyman and I teach High School science. I do lots of projects with students. We spend time in class learning different concepts, but I never really know if the students understand them until I can get them to demonstrate their learning through a project. I DO have to carefully design the student project to make sure it really puts them in a situation to bring all the concepts together and apply them to solve a problem and develop the product. I have found that the student projects not only get the students attention and keep them engaged, but they also help students figure out where their own weaknesses are in their learning. And they want to learn more!	**GAYNELL LYMAN**
Gaynell talked about how important student projects are to helping students bring all their learning together. She also thinks that this form of assessment really makes students responsible for their own learning. Student generated assessments are one of the three components in a balanced assessment program. How are you using student projects to assess student learning?	**DR. CORALLO**

🗁 PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Ask yourself: What type of assessment do you use most often during daily practice? Why? How would you like to improve your use of assessment data to improve instruction?

Suggested use for this module:

1. **Analyze:**

Please select one of the scenarios below and problem-solve a list of possible solutions. Record your ideas in the space provided. Discuss these ideas with your other educators (mentor, colleagues, or other beginning teachers).

2. **View:**

Watch the corresponding video on this topic. How does this information change your ideas?

3. **Compare:**

Revisit the scenario selected. Next, review the section entitled, "Possible Solutions" comparing the ideas listed with your own list.

4. **Reflect:**

How will you apply this new information to your current or future classroom? What goal will you set to help you begin to change your practices? What support is needed to help you accomplish this goal?

5. **Apply:**

List the first step towards change below. Create a timeline for success and place deadlines in your personal planner as a reminder. How will you know when you have met your goals?

Scenarios 1 & 2: Balanced Assessment

Scenario 1:

Mike is a new student in third grade this year. He is something of a puzzle to his teacher after three weeks of school. He has difficulties related to reading and writing. He tends to be quiet in class. Mike recognizes some simple sight words, but cannot recognize words with more than one syllable. He enjoys hearing stories aloud and can retell many of the facts from the text. When Mike reads on his own, he sometimes has trouble remembering simple story details. One day in class recently, Mike put his head down and fails to participate in the small group lesson. How could this scenario about Mike be influenced by assessment?

Scenario 2:

This is Yolanda's first year in high school. She is a quiet student who turns in all of her work on time. She has been making A's and B's on every assignment. As the end of the nine weeks approaches, you administer a multiple-choice test on the units you have taught so far this academic year. It is a surprise when you grade Yolanda's paper and find out that she failed this important test. After a couple of months of school, you also realize that you do not know much about her background. Since Yolanda is in many classes with your colleagues, you find out that she has done poorly on all of her quarterly tests. How would you respond?

Circle the scenario that you selected below:

Scenario 1 **Scenario 2**

Record a list of your own possible solutions here:

Summary & Goal Setting:

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Classroom assessment serves as an integral practice for informing instruction. There are two main types of assessment which take place in the classroom. Formative or informal assessment happens during instruction. Summative or formal assessment occurs at the end of a teaching unit. Utilize the following suggestions to establish a learning-centered climate in your classroom:

1. **Get to know your students through**

    - investigating previous assessment information such as student records and testing results,
    - administering diagnostic instruments to determine student strengths and academic needs,
    - giving interest inventories or attitude surveys to learn more about student beliefs and pastimes, and
    - observing and gathering anecdotal notes during instruction.

2. **Questioning Techniques**

    Effective questioning during instruction will promote critical thinking and can serve as a review for previous classes. Useful questions involve all the learners in the classroom and include wait time for processing information. Questions should be stated in clear terms and match the learning targets you are currently working on in your classroom. Higher level thinking will encourage students to do more than just recall facts. Master teachers expect students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. Ask questions such as:

    - Tell me in your own words what this means.
    - Can you give me an example of this concept?
    - What would happen if…?
    - How could you solve this problem?
    - What other ways could we look at this situation?
    - What caused this person to respond this way? How do you know?
    - What would it be like if …?
    - How could you design this?
    - Could you generate a new ending?
    - Select the best option. Why did you choose this?
    - Would you recommend this…? Why or Why not?

3. **Examples of Informal Instructional Techniques for Determining Daily Student Progress**

- Quick Write: Provide students with one to two minutes at the end of class to write a quick response as their ticket out of the classroom. Encourage them to record one significant new piece of learning and one question that is still lingering after your lesson.
- 3-2-1 strategy: Ask students to record the following on an index card:
  - ✓ 3 important facts you discovered in your own words
  - ✓ 2 interesting things about the topic
  - ✓ 1 remaining question
- Two-column notes: Students fold a sheet of notebook paper in half. On the left-hand column, they take notes to synthesize the main ideas from the presentation or text. On the right-hand column, they respond personally to the ideas. Students may illustrate, comment, make connections, or generate questions to demonstrate learning.

4. **Balanced Assessment Techniques**

- Documenting student progress using a variety of methods. In addition to classroom tests and assignments, be certain to incorporate samples of student progress across time into your assessment repertoire.
- Observation notes called anecdotal records are useful for documenting day to day progress in the classroom. Try print labels with the name of each student at the top of the label. Place the sheets of labels on your clipboard. As you circulate to work with students, place the date on the label and jot down a note about what you observed. Create a page for each student and stick the labels on this page throughout the year. This will supplement grade book information and provide parents with specifics during parent conferences.
- Portfolios work well for collecting systematic work samples across time. Sample artifacts are chosen to demonstrate how the student has met learning targets in an organized way. Portfolios are used for showcasing learning, documenting progress, and evaluating differences amongst students. Portfolios include samples of student work rather than a compilation of all work completed. First, develop the contents of the collection and scoring criteria. Next, model the type of content to include and collection procedures for students. Lastly, complete the evaluation process by providing feedback to the student. Rubrics are helpful for this process.
- Self-Reflection encourages student to become part of the assessment process. Periodically ask students to provide honest feedback on their own progress. Use prompts

which require students to discuss improvements and growth over time, spotlight best efforts and demonstrate mastery of course expectations.

4. Flexible Groupings

Whether you are conducting teacher or student-led groups, it is essential to change your learning configurations to meet the needs of students. Flexible groupings contribute to learning through idea-sharing and group problem-solving. Students may be grouped according to specific learning goals, needs on a particular skill, or based on the dynamics of the activity you are conducting. Students may work in small groups or with partners. Consider student personalities and strengths when creating grouping configurations. Make sure that the group task and roles are clear and circulate often to monitor.

🗁 ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Overall teachers spend a significant amount of time each week outside of the normal school day both working with students and working on school-related activities without students present. These additional hours argue that defining a teacher's performance exclusively in terms of classroom instruction may be ignoring other important responsibilities that teachers are often willing to take on, such as tutoring and facilitating extracurricular activities.

  Burian-Fitzgrald, Marisa & Harris, Debbi. (2004). *Giving 110%: Portrait of a Michigan teacher's work week.* Retrieved October 1, 2007, from **http://www.epc.msu.edu/publications/REPORT/report22.pdf**

- Research on learning to teach has implications for the design of induction and mentoring programs: Giving beginning teachers difficult teaching assignments (multiple preparations, subjects out of their field, or demanding extracurricular assignments) is not only stressful for them but impedes the process of learning to teach.

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